



City of Greenbelt  
Department of Planning & Community Development  
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## **DETAILED SITE PLAN ROYAL FARMS**

**STAFF REPORT  
August 14, 2020**

### **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>Applicant/Property Owner:</b>	RF Greenbelt RE, LLC
<b>Subject:</b>	Detailed Site Plan
<b>Project Name:</b>	Royal Farms
<b>Location:</b>	East end of the intersection of Capitol Drive and Greenbelt Road
<b>Acreage:</b>	4.07
<b>Existing Zoning:</b>	C-O (Commercial Office)
<b>Existing Land Use:</b>	Undeveloped
<b>Proposed Land Use:</b>	Food and beverage store in combination with a gas station, and a separate commercial building (specific use is unknown at this time)

### **II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Applicant, RF Greenbelt RE, LLC, has submitted a Detailed Site Plan (DSP) to M-NCPPC for the construction of a 4,649 square foot food and beverage store, a Royal Farms gas station, and a separate 4,368 square foot commercial building.

Development of a Royal Farms in this location was previously discussed by the Advisory Planning Board and the Greenbelt City Council on April 11, 2018 and August 1, 2018 respectively. At that time it was envisioned that the development would include a Royal Farms gas station with a food and beverage store and an urgent care located in a separate building on the site.

A Preliminary Plan of Subdivision was previously approved for this site. A condition for approval of this preliminary plan reads, "In addition to the existing auto dealership, total development of the Golden Triangle be limited to 912,000 square feet of gross office floor area or a combination of office and other uses which would generate equal or less traffic impacts than 912,000 square feet of gross office floor area." The Applicant has provided information to demonstrate that the proposed trips generated will not exceed the cap. Staff is currently reviewing this information.

### **III. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The current DSP proposes the construction of a 4,649 square-foot food and beverage store in combination with a Royal Farms gas station, and a separate 4,368 square foot commercial building. The proposed use for the commercial building is unknown at this time.

#### **A. Royal Farms Gas Station and Food/Beverage Store**

As noted above this DSP proposes the development of a gas station and a food and beverage store. A food or beverage store is defined by the Prince George's County Zoning Code as, "A use providing the retail sales of food, beverages, and sundries primarily for home consumption, and may include food or beverage preparation. Does not include a Department or Variety Store that provides incidental sales of candy, gum, and similar non-refrigerated items at a check-out counter, or in a standard vending machine."

The gas pumps are proposed to be set back 150 feet from Greenbelt Road and a total of 16 gas pumps are proposed. The food and beverage roofline is proposed to be 21.75' with a peak height of 32.11'. The gas station canopy is proposed to be 19' tall.

Between the existing property line and a proposed decorative fence, a vegetated buffer comprised of 150 shrubs, 5 shade trees, and 20 ornamental trees is proposed. This vegetated buffer is approximately 10' wide. There are currently trees between the back of the sidewalk on Greenbelt Road and the property line. These trees, within the State Highway right-of-way, are proposed to be cleared under a separate permit.

The architecture of the food and beverage store is consistent with other Royal Farms locations, utilizing stone veneer, brick veneer, and cementitious siding. The plans also propose a total of six (6) perforated metal picnic tables to be located around portions of the exterior of the food and beverage store. There are two (2) trash enclosures proposed for the northern portion of the site, one for each of the proposed uses. These trash enclosures are proposed to be enclosed on three (3) sides with field brick to match with the building and the front will be enclosed with a fence gate. The northern portion of the site is also the proposed locations for a vacuum and free air station.

## **B. Commercial Pad Site**

As mentioned previously the second commercial building is proposed to be 4,368 square feet with a maximum height of 30 feet. The architecture of the proposed commercial building incorporates brick and cement panel siding.

The use for the second commercial pad site is currently unknown and throughout the review of this development Staff has expressed concerns about the development of this portion of the site. The first concern is that there are very few commercial uses that are permitted within this zone. Commercial uses that would be permitted in this zone for this site include: eating or drinking establishments (excluding drive-through service), bank, savings, and loan association, and office of a medical practitioner.

Staff's second concern about the development of this portion of the site is the implications for woodland conservation. The majority of this portion of the site is currently wooded and as the Type II Tree Conservation plan shows this area is proposed to be cleared. The Applicant is proposing to meet the woodland conservation requirements by reforesting 0.61 acres on the northern portion of the site and providing 1.13 acres of off-site woodland conservation. There are currently very few, if any, sites available in the City for woodland conservation. As a result of this any required woodland conservation would likely happen outside of the City. If this portion of the site were to be left in its current condition, Staff believes that the necessary off-site woodland conservation requirement would be reduced. Leaving this portion of the site undeveloped would also reduce stormwater run-off.

The third concern about the development of this portion of the site is the effect development will have on the historic site, Toaping Castle. If this portion of the lot were to not be developed it would allow for greater protection of the Toaping Castle Site.

In addition, Staff has expressed concerns about the double driveway proposed and the internal vehicular circulation pattern. Staff believes that the internal circulation pattern will create conflict points. If the area for the second building were to be left undeveloped this would remove the need for direct access to this portion of the site and therefore would reduce potential vehicular conflict points. The removal of the direct access to the second commercial building would also increase the opportunities to expand the buffer area along Greenbelt Road.

## **IV. ANALYSIS**

### **A. Existing Zoning**

The subject property is zoned Commercial Office (C-O). The uses for this zone are of a predominantly nonretail commercial nature, such as business, professional and medical offices, or related administrative services. Food and beverage stores are not permitted in the C-O Zone, unless in combination with a gas station as permitted by CB-025-2018.

On September 18, 2018 the Prince George's County Council passed CB-025-2018 which amended the commercial table of uses in the Zoning Ordinance to permit food and beverage

store uses in combination with gas station uses in the C-O Zones of Prince George's County, under specified circumstances.

The specified circumstances are:

- a. The proposed use is on a property that has a minimum of 1.75 and a maximum of eight (8) acres
- b. The property on which the use will be located abuts the right-of-way for a roadway with a functional transportation classification of arterial or higher; and
- c. The Planning Board and/or District Council finds that the proposed gas station use conforms with all regulations set forth in Section 27-358(a) of this Subtitle

While the specific use of the second commercial building is unknown at this time, commercial uses permitted in the C-O Zone include, but are not limited to, eating or drinking establishments, medical offices, and bank, savings, and loan associations.

## **B. Proposed Zoning**

While this project is currently moving forward under the existing zoning it is important to consider how this project would be treated under the new zoning ordinance and how that would affect the City's role in the development review process.

Section 27-3605(a)(2) of the new zoning ordinance details the types of development that are exempt from the requirement of a detailed site plan including, "Construction, expansion, or alteration of nonresidential development consisting of less than a total of twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet of gross floor area." The proposed Royal Farms development proposes a 4,649 square foot food and beverage store and a 4,368 square foot commercial building.

Under the new Zoning Ordinance the subject parcel is proposed to be zoned Commercial, General, and Office (CGO). Currently, in the CGO zone a special exception would be required for the development of a gas station. The criteria for a special exception are as listed below:

- a. The subject property shall have at least 150 feet of frontage on, and direct vehicular access to a street with a right-of-way width of at least 70 feet
- b. Driveways shall be at least 30 feet wide unless a lesser width is allowed for a one-way driveway by the Maryland State Highway Administration, the County Department of Public Works and Transportation, or the relevant municipal public works department, whichever is applicable
- c. On a corner lot, a driveway may begin at a point not less than 20 feet from the point of curvature (PC) of the curb return or the point of curvature of the edge of paving at an intersection without curb and gutter
- d. Driveways shall be defined by curbing
- e. Gasoline pumps and other service appliances shall be set back at least 25 feet from the street right-of-way

- f. The storage or junking of wrecked motor vehicles (whether capable of movement or not) is prohibited
- g. No storage or parking shall be offered for rent
- h. Canopies over gas pumps shall have a maximum clearance height of 15 feet above grade except when State or Federal law requires higher clearance

In summary, under the new zoning ordinance, the proposed gas station would require a special exception. Depending on the specific use of the second commercial pad site a detailed site plan would not be required and instead would go straight to County building permit which does not get referred to the City for review and comment. For example, a detailed site plan would not be required if the second commercial pad site were developed with a restaurant, quick-service (with or without drive-through).

### **C. Environment and Landscaping**

#### **Stormwater Management (SWM):**

The Applicant has received stormwater concept plan approval from the Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement. The existing impervious area within the site is 0.59 acres. The proposed impervious area within the site is 2.34 acres. The proposed impervious area would make up 57% of the total site.

The proposed design utilizes 7 micro-bioretenention areas. According to the submitted Site Development Concept Narrative, "Four of the micro-bios will be standard graded micro-bioretenentions. The other three micro-bios will be structural planter box type micro-bioretenention facilities." The design allows for 15,193 cubic feet, which exceeds the 15,051 cubic feet required, of water to be treated on-site before being released into the existing storm drain. The site development concept plan also includes underground storage for a 100-year event.

The Stormwater Management Concept Plan also includes a stormwater pollution prevention plan. This plan includes the following elements:

- Fueling stations will be covered with a canopy
- A trench drain to prevent run-on with inline oil/grit separator to address runoff
- Fuel pad runoff will be captured by an adjacent storm drain and conveyed to oil/grit separator
- Inlets will be marked with "No Dumping, Drains to Chesapeake Bay"
- Fueling station will be paved with concrete instead of asphalt

#### **Type II Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII):**

This project is subject to the provisions of the *Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance* and development activities must be in conformance with an approved Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII). The site currently has 2.68 acres of existing woodland and the plans propose the clearing of 2.68 acres of woodland.

The Applicant's Type II Tree Conservation Plan shows that 1.74 acres of Woodland Conservation is required. The Applicant proposes to meet this requirement with 0.61 acres of afforestation/reforestation on-site and 1.13 acres of off-site woodland conservation. The area proposed for woodland reforestation is located on the northern portion of the site and is currently a gravel parking lot utilized by Capitol Cadillac.

The Applicant is proposing the following tree species for the reforestation with their respective percentage of stocking: Red Maple (5.1%), Serviceberry (8.0%), Eastern Redbud (17.4%), American Holly (8%), Sweetgum (18.4%), Virginia Pine (5.15%), Willow Oak (18.4%), and Red Oak (19.5%). The City's arborist is currently reviewing the plans for any recommended changes to this tree schedule. The total number of trees proposed is 488.

The Type II Tree Conservation Plan also shows the clearing of the trees in front of the property, within in State Highway Administration right-of-way, along Greenbelt Road under a separate permit. Staff has concerns about this clearing. While Staff recognizes the need for visibility of the site they also believe that there are opportunities to minimize the amount of clearing that is needed while still providing visibility.

#### Lighting:

The use of lighting on this site has been raised as a concern, particularly with respect to the proximity of the site to Greenbelt National Park. The submitted photometric plan proposes the use of 15 lights for the gas station canopy. These LED lights would be mounted at the height of 18 feet. Around the exterior of the site and around the buildings there are 16 lights proposed. These LED lights will be mounted at a height of 19 feet. There are no lights proposed for the northern portion of the site where parking spaces are shown behind the Royal Farms food and beverage store.

#### Landscaping:

This DSP is subject to the requirements of the Prince George's County Landscape Manual. To meet the sustainable landscaping requirements the Applicant must provide 13 shade trees, 13 ornamental trees, and 74 shrubs. The Applicant is proposing to exceed these requirements by providing 15 shade trees, 14 ornamental trees, and 227 shrubs. No evergreen trees are required or proposed for this site.

Staff does have a concern about the buffer along Greenbelt Road. Currently the Applicant is proposing a landscape strip along the southern portion of the site that fronts on Greenbelt Road. This landscape strip is composed of 5 shade trees, 20 ornamental trees, and 150 shrubs. Staff strongly believes that the area between Greenbelt Road and the proposed one-way drive aisle should act as a "green area/buffer area" consisting of existing tree cover and proposed landscaping.

## D. Parking and Loading

The Applicant is proposing a total of 90 parking spaces, 2 loading spaces, and 4 bicycle racks. These parking spaces are split between the Royal Farms Building and the Proposed Commercial Building. There are currently no electric vehicle charging stations proposed on the site. The chart below details how each use is proposed to be served by parking:

<b>ROYAL FARMS</b>				
	Description	Rate	Required	Provided
Parking	Retail: 4,649 SF Gross Floor Area	1 space/150 SF of the first 3,000 SF	20	53
		+1 Space/ 200 SF (Above the first 3,000 SF) 1,649 SF	8	
	Gas Station	1 Space/ Employee *8 Employees	8	
	Eating or Drinking Establishments (Not including drive thru service)	1 space / 3 Seats 18 Outdoor Seats 11 Indoor Seats	10	
Accessible		51-75 Spaces	2	3
Total Number of Parking Spaces			46	56
Loading	4,649 SF Gross Lease Area	One Loading Space for 2,000 – 10,000 SF Gross Lease Area	1	1
Bicycle	Non-Residential Development	N/A	N/A	4 (2 Racks)

<b>PROPOSED COMMERCIAL BUILDING</b>				
	Description	Rate	Required	Provided
Parking	Retail: 4,368 SF Gross Floor Area	1 space/150 SF of the first 3,000 SF	20	32
		+1 Space/ 200 SF (Above the first 3,000 SF) 1,368 SF	7	
Accessible		26-50 Spaces	2	2
Total Number of Parking Spaces			27	34
Loading	4,368 SF Gross Lease Area	One Loading Space for 2,000 – 10,000 SF. Gross	1	1

		Lease Area		
Bicycle	Non-Residential Development	N/A	N/A	4 (2 Racks)

### **E. Transportation and Circulation**

The Applicant has proposed two (2) access points to the site off of Capitol Drive, no direct access from Greenbelt Road is proposed. One of these driveways is proposed to be an entrance only and will directly connect traffic to the second commercial building on the site. The second proposed driveway is an entrance/exit access that will provide access to the proposed gas pumps and Royal Farms building.

Staff has raised questions about the access points due to safety concerns and a strong preference to reduce the number of curb cuts on Capitol Drive. Staff believes that one curb cut could accommodate this site. Staff also believes that channelization within the site that separates flows of traffic could adequately address pedestrian safety concerns and reduce points of potential conflict for motorists.

There are four crosswalks proposed for the site and five (5) foot sidewalks are proposed to accommodate pedestrian traffic. A crosswalk is proposed to connect the Royal Farms food and beverage store and the sidewalk along the perimeter of the site and a separate crosswalk is proposed to connect the two (2) commercial buildings. A crosswalk is also provided from the sidewalk adjacent to the parking spaces on the southern portion of the site to facilitate access to the Toaping Castle site. The last proposed crosswalk is along the property's frontage with Capitol Drive. There is an existing crosswalk at the intersection of Greenbelt Road and Capitol Drive.

The Applicant is proposing the installation of four (4) bicycle racks within the site. Staff believes that sharrows or bicycle lanes should be installed on Capitol Drive to further facilitate bicycle access to the site. This would also provide connection from the bicycle lanes on Greenbelt Road and provide cyclist access to the Toaping Castle site.

### **F. Toaping Castle Historic Site**

The Toaping Castle is located on this site. As detailed by County Historic Preservation Staff, "The site was occupied by members of the Walker family, who established a farmstead on the site in the mid-eighteenth century. Several members of the Walker family participated in the Revolutionary War. Members of the Walker family resided at the site until the land was purchased by the Federal Government in the 1930s."

This site was designated a Historic Resource in the 2013 Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan. The site will be evaluated for Historic Site status at the September 15, 2020 Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Planning Staff is in agreement with County Historic Preservation Staff that an interpretive panel should be installed to detail the significance of the site. The Applicant is proposing a split-rail



fence along the perimeter of the site. The Applicant has indicated that grading activities have been pulled away from the historic site in order to increase protection of the site.

### **G. Signage**

The Applicant previously submitted a Departure from Sign Design Standards to accommodate a greater number of signs and greater sign area than is permitted in the C-O Zone. Since that time the departure has been withdrawn by the Applicant in order to design signage that would be permitted within this zone.

The revised proposed signage includes both freestanding signage and building mounted signage. Three (3) freestanding signs are proposed. The first is a Royal Farms monument sign that includes the gas prices on Greenbelt Road. This sign is proposed to be 8 feet tall and 15'-6" wide. The second sign is for the proposed second commercial building to be placed on Capitol Drive. This sign is proposed to be 8' tall and 5'-2" wide. The third freestanding sign is a directional sign proposed to be 4' tall and 1'-5 1/2" wide.

The revised sign plan also includes building mounted signage. On the Royal Farms food and beverage store the plan proposes one (1) wall mounted sign that reads "Royal Farms." This sign is proposed to be illuminated with LED lights. Also on the food and beverage store is a proposed "World Famous Chicken & Fresh Kitchen" sign. On the gas station canopy the plan proposes two (2) mounted signs, both that read "Royal Farms." On the proposed second commercial building one (1) mounted sign is proposed.

### **V. Conclusion:**

As noted throughout this report there are a variety of concerns that Staff has raised about the proposed development. These concerns are detailed below:

- There are currently no electric vehicle charging stations provided on the site. Electric vehicle charging stations should be provided on the site.
- The Applicant should work with Planning Staff, the Greenbelt Museum Coordinator, and County Historic Preservation Staff on an interpretive panel for the Toaping Castle Site.
- For the reasons detailed in this report Staff believes that the area shown for the development of a second commercial building should be left undeveloped.
- For the reasons detailed in this report, Staff believes that the entrance only driveway should be removed and internal channelization should direct drivers to the second commercial building, if developed.
- The lighting on the site shall be of a type and quality intended to prevent spillover lighting effects.
- Opportunities to retain existing trees, while providing visibility, along Greenbelt Road should be explored and implemented. The area between Greenbelt Road and the proposed one-way drive aisle should be provided as a "green area/buffer area" consisting of existing tree cover and proposed landscaping.

- Staff understands that Royal Farms utilizes Green Building Practices. The Applicant should provide additional information about how green building practices will be utilized, particularly with respect to the second commercial building.
- The installation of bicycle lanes or sharrows should be explored on Capitol Drive which will provide a connection from the bicycle lanes on Greenbelt Road to the site.